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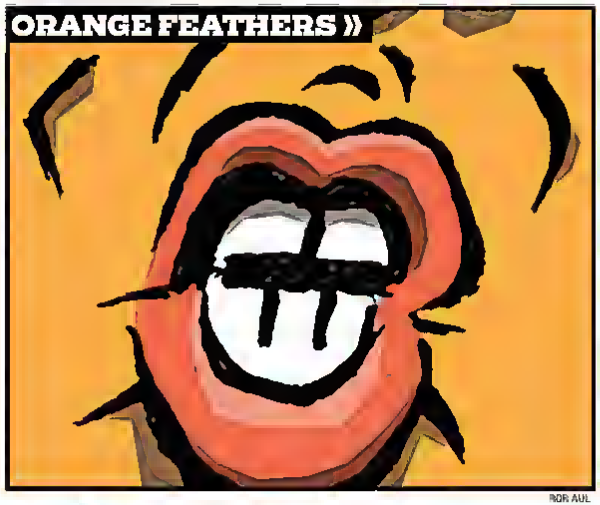

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License to Kill

Why does DA Tony Rackauckas think it's okay to let an informant get away with murders?

RICHIE BECKMAN

moxley CONFIDENTIAL

»R. SCOTT MOXLEY

Determined to become one of Southern California's prominent criminal-justice voices, L. Song Richardson waited mere days into her term as the new dean of UC Irvine's School of Law to conduct a Jan. 13 "teach-in & training" honoring Martin Luther King Jr.'s legacy by, as her event poster declared, "mobilizing for justice in an unjust world."

Such an event certainly wouldn't feel remarkable in Los Angeles or San Francisco. But Orange County hasn't always been hospitable to progressive activism emerging at one of its most prominent institutions. For decades, we've been home to right-wing political kooks who've specialized in comforting the affluent, scapegoating minorities and, no matter what disgraceful outrage committed, defending dirty law-enforcement officials as well as bigotry.

It was only 18 years ago when judges and prosecutors here allied with California Attorney General Bill Lockyer—a liberal Democrat, no less—to continue to block gay citizens from serving on juries. Lockyer argued that gays shouldn't receive such a "special" perk, putting them on civic duty par with their heterosexual relatives and neighbors. After all, the AG asserted, who could trust a minority group producing the diverse likes of "RuPaul Truman Capote and Ellen DeGeneres?"

I recalled that case because William Bedsworth, a justice at the California Court of Appeal, attended Richardson's UCI conference. Bedsworth—a Republican, no less—wrote the groundbreaking 2000 appellate ruling rejecting the institutionalized discrimination. He noted the gay community's "history of persecution [is] comparable to that [which] blacks and women share" and observed that gay citizens "deserve to bear their share of the burdens and benefits of citizenship, including jury service."

It's laughable now that the justice's stance caused so much handwringing from defenders of a warped status quo. Richardson, a graduate of Harvard and Yale universities, hopes her students will find inspiration from past acts of bravery. She wants them to challenge "harmful rhetoric" of establishment players and the government "policies that inevitably follow" as weapons of oppression.

"We have made some progress, but let's not fool ourselves," Richardson told the enthusiastic crowd. "We still have a racialized immigration system and a racialized criminal-justice system. We still have poverty, segregation, discrimination, threats to voting rights, threats to freedom of expression. It's time for those of us who oppose racism, misogyny and hatred to build coalitions and to fight any deviations from the values that all of us hold dear."

There's no need for a posse to search for entrenched forces repulsed by her agenda. You can see them standing in plain sight, including Tony Rackauckas, the soon-to-be-75-year-old district attorney who is seeking his sixth term over a county with a population larger than 20 states. Rackauckas began his stint by declaring no interest in political-corruption cases, then spent the next 18 years showing why. He and prosecution teams have chronically hid, hidden exculpatory evidence, protected wealthy crooks and ignored police corruption when it would improve their chances of winning convictions.

It's a record that deserves more scrutiny. The DA and his equally tainted cohort, Sheriff Sandra Hutchens, brag that when they attend community events, nobody mentions scandals that have wrecked at least 17 murder, attempted-murder and felony-assault cases. Indeed, both politicians openly mock the rule of law. When Superior Court Judge Thomas M. Goethals insisted on law-enforcement compliance with his orders, Rackauckas papered him in nearly five dozen cases, and Hutchens concocted a multiyear scheme to hide records revealing deputy cheating.

More recently—in fact, the day after UCI announced Richardson's elevation—James Laird, one of Rackauckas' top lieutenants, inadvertently conceded a point that I'd made years ago: the Orange County district attorney's office's (OCDA) professed outrage about murders sometimes hinges on expediency and, worse, racism.

At that Dec. 22, 2017, press conference, a tense Laird asserted that freeing serial killer Oscar Moriel in less than four years represents sound decision-making. On separate "hunting" expeditions armed with weapons such as an AK-47, Moriel (a.k.a. "Scar") looked for victims to murder in Santa Ana. The Mexican Mafia associate concedes he killed at least five or six people and attempted to murder a seventh. To save himself from California's Three Strikes accountability, Moriel proposed a secret pact. He'd become a jailhouse snitch against other government targets—*none of them serial killers*—to avoid spending the rest of his life in prison. Rackauckas accepted.

Reporters pressed Laird to explain why Moriel hadn't been minimally required to solve his own murders with immunity before getting a sweetheart arrangement. "Well, we just didn't make it part of the deal," he said. Never mind those revelations might have given the victims' families closure or helped exonerate any inmates wrongly convicted of the serial killer's crimes.

This prosecutor didn't care. Santa Ana's "a pretty violent" place, Laird rationalized before adding a vocal shoulder shrug. "We have unfortunate shootings that occur [there] all the time." The city has certainly seen more than its share of violence, but the OCDA's ambivalence to that plight is striking. Moriel's victims, poor and Latino, never received consideration. Their killer didn't undergo a minute of meaningful investigation. He escaped all charges.

Meanwhile, in recent days, in a separate world when it comes to criminal justice, the sheriff and the DA conducted intense investigations, held press conferences and filed charges related to the tragic murder of one 19-year-old white man.

RSCOTTMOXLEY@OCWEEKLY.COM

POLITICAL FOOTBALL
» STEVE LOWERY

Jacksonville Jaguars vs. New England Patriots

Jacksonville update: The city's economy was saved untold damage when Florida was taken off a list of states the Trump administration had reopened to offshore drilling. That list included every other state with a coastline. Since governors, both Republican and Democrat, of all the other states made it clear they didn't want to be on the list, they demanded Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke explain what made Florida so special, you know, besides resembling the "before" photo in an erectile-dysfunction ad. Zinke said it was because the state was "unique," which is one way to describe a place where "Florida Man Arrested for Shoplifting Rack of Ribs, 9-Piece Fried Chicken, Mashed Potatoes in Pants" competes with "Florida Man Gets Herpes From Florida Monkey" for news space.

New England update: Some were surprised in 2018 when Patriots quarterback Tom Brady endorsed Donald Trump for President, but the two have so very much in common. Both are completely comfortable with cheating to get ahead. Both owe much of their success to creepy-looking dudes—Bill Belichick and Steve Bannon—you wouldn't want to see anywhere near a petting zoo. Both are married to models, Brady to a supermodel. Trump to a "model." And both think of themselves as handsome. Brady in an Unfrozen Caveman Lawyer kind of way (as played by Phil Hartman—look it up, kids!) while Trump would be considered really hot if tainted citrus ever became a thing.

Love of the game: The real reason he took Florida off the list, Zinke later said, was because he felt a personal connection with its governor, Rick Scott. Zinke said he met with Scott and "that meeting was the first in what I believe will be a series," and pretty soon, it was hard to tell if Zinke was talking about energy policy or cutting one of those creepy eHarmony ads. Zinke's a sad case, he claims he doesn't believe that climate change exists, but just eight years ago, he signed a letter urging then-President Barack Obama (*sigh*) to pass climate change legislation. Oh, the irony of being in charge of the interior when you completely lack one yourself.

Consensus: I think Zinke and Scott make an adorable couple. I'm rooting for those kids — and the Jaguars!

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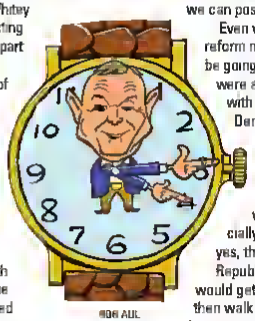
DACA Caca

» MATT COKER

Between President Donald Trump's saying immigration reform should be a "bill of love" to his declaration that saving Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) is "dead" thanks to Democrats refusing to seriously negotiate (and not because of his crack about having immigrants from "shit-hole countries"), Representative Dana Rohrabacher (R-Whitey World) once again was rejecting any attempts to make DACA part of federal law.

"If we legalize the status of 850,000 young people who are here illegally, we can expect tens of millions of young people throughout the world to notice that," bellowed The Mouth That Rohrabachered on World Net Daily (WND) Radio last week. "If they would like the government benefits of health care and education that come from legally being in the United States, there is no reason for me to believe this won't obliterate our chances of getting control of our border."



BOB AUL

At that time, there still appeared to be good-faith efforts between the White House and members of Congress from both parties to create a pathway to citizenship for people who were brought to the U.S. illegally when they were children. The DACA protections end in March, which is obviously fine with a certain Surf Shitty congressman.

"We're talking about millions of people here who will be brought into this country, and there's no way we can build a wall high enough or dig a ditch deep enough to stop it after we've given them a treasure house of medical care and education," Rohrabacher told WND. "We are going to undo any good we can possibly do otherwise."

Even when the immigration-reform negotiations seemed to be going well—as in both sides were at least talking cordially with each other—the rub was Democrats wanting action on DACA first before moving on to allowable legal immigration, the U.S. labor market's future worker needs and especially border security including, yes, the Great Wall of Trump. Republicans fear Democrats would get their way with DACA, then walk away from the table when it comes to the thornier issues. Rohrabacher, who for decades opposed any legislation that would remove the prefix "illegal" from "immigrant," makes it clear to WND Radio that DACA is a non-starter to him. "The only thing I would have a stomach for if DACA comes first is if it's defeated."

Got Dana Watch fodder? Email mcoker@ocweekly.com.

HeyYou!

» ANONYMOUS

Trumpy Claus

More than an hour before the holiday boat parade was to start, the Dana Point Harbor parking lot was overflowing, with a line of cars waiting to get in. It looked as if my car was blocked by a parked sedan, but it wasn't. I walked in front of the white car, expecting to be asked if I was leaving, but it appeared empty. Two polite guys in an SUV asked me if I was leaving, and I said yes. When I started my engine and turned on the lights, the white car woke up and backed up to block my car. The SUV guys got out and yelled at the driver, but he screamed on and on about how he was waiting half an hour. He sounded like Bush the First. The SUV guys said they asked me, so my spot was theirs. The shouting escalated. I finally got out and asked the driver of the sedan to move or I'd call the police.

BOB AUL

He screamed his "I've been waiting half an hour" refrain. Finally, near apoplectic, he told the Latino SUV guys (who were obviously Americans) to go back to their country. Without pause, I yelled, "F YOU, TRUMP BRO" to the white car as it drove away. Happy fucking holidays, creep.

HEY, YOU! Send anonymous thanks, confessions or accusations—changing or deleting the names of the guilty and innocent—to "Hey, You!" c/o *OC Weekly*, 18475 Bandilier Circle, Fountain Valley, CA 92708, or email us at letters@ocweekly.com.

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¡VIVA LOS TACOS!

A timely guide to some of the most delicious food you can find on a tortillo in Orange County

By Cynthia Rebolledo

On Jan. 27, *OC Weekly* hosts its first taco festival!

Viva Los Tacos pops up at Santa Ana's MainPlace Mall, with more than 30 taco vendors from OC and beyond, among them. Tacolized, winner of *OC Weekly*'s 2016 Summer Fest taco throwdown (cross your fingers and toes that the masters of *el puerco* bring their prized al pastor), Wrld Taco by Bear Flag Fish Co., who in 2017 were our readers' picks for Best Taco and Best Fish Taco, El Pollo Norteño, who has built a following since 1981 for its mesquite-grilled chicken, and the legendary Carnitas El Momo, which brings to the table its award-winning Aporkalypse taco, a combination of cueritos (braised pig skin), buche and Guanajuato-style carnitas. Get ready to taste the love and dedication that comes from Romulo Acosta's (a.k.a. Momo) enormous copper pot, which has simmered the best *surtido* in Los Angeles for the past 50 years.

Other vendors include La Vegana Mexicana, who'll sample delicious vegan tamales, El Pepino Loco, whose house-made chamoy brings fruit salad to a new level, and Rollin' Creamery, slangin' rolled ice cream tacos. Be ready to partake in unlimited food samples and drinks, a margarita competition presented by Milagro Tequila and a michelada bar with all the fixin's by Modelo Tour de Sabor, as you enjoy what DJ Lala can do with turntables.

In celebration of all things taco, we pay homage here to a few of our favorite Orange County eateries, all of which offer more than just the standard, whether it's by preserving heritage corn, introducing fusion flavors, or further proving why taco trucks should be on every corner. Read, drool, then go enjoy these Mexi classics, regional flavors, and innovative and bold combinations.

ANNE WATSON PHOTOGRAPHY

TACO MARÍA

Carlos Salgado's cuisine not only challenges preconceptions of Mexican food, but it also pushing the "alta cocina" movement forward. Salgado serves fresh ingredients while preserving emotional Mexican flavors. And if that's not *chingon* enough, he's partnered up with Masienda, the leading importers and purveyors of heirloom Latin ingredients and non-GMO maize, on a mission to elevate the tortilla by educating consumers and working with small farming communities to bring forth the real flavor, aroma and taste of corn. The next time you question why his tacos are $14 to $18 per pair, know he's offering you a better product that supports our local farmers' markets, purveyors of humanely raised meats and sustainable fishing practices. If you've never been to Taco María, order the taco arrachera—tender hanger steak cooked medium-rare, then served with roasted chiles and topped with a crispy strip of applewood bacon and queso fundido on a delicate but chewy heirloom blue corn tortilla. *3313 Hyland Ave., Costa Mesa, (714) 538-8444, www.tacomaria.com.*

BURRITOS LA PALMA

Yes, we know it's a burrito, but this palm-sized creation has beat out established tacos to take home the distinction of being named Southern California's best taco two years in a row at Tacolandia (2015 and 2016). Albert and Lauren Bañuelos have started a mini-empire, with a restaurant in El Monte, a food truck and a SanTana location. The burria de res and buttery homemade flour tortillas combine to form a succulent, tightly packed burrito that we can't get enough of. *410 N. Bristol St., Santa Ana, (657) 266-0575, www.burritoslapalma.net.*

BRIAN FEINZIMER

ANNE MARIE PANDERIAN

DOS CHINOS

This Viet-Mexi truck has gone brick-and-mortar, but you can still catch the truck roaming the county. Hop Pham and Viet Tran hit the streets in 2010, the peak of the food-truck craze, creating fusion dishes such as Hollywood chicken (coconut panang curry chicken, fried yams, tamarind and cabbage) and Bolsa pork belly (a five-spice roast pork belly topped with pickled daikon and carrots, cabbage and salsa verde). Everything on the menu is great, but the Oahu shrimp is our go-to: garlic shrimp topped with sweet pineapple, crema and crisp cabbage. *201 E. Fourth St., Ste. 139, Santa Ana, (714) 383-0414, www.doschinos.com.*

LOLA GASPAR

Since the *Weekly* first reviewed the place in 2008, Lola Gaspar has evolved to become one of the county's great restaurants. It serves tacos every day of the week, but our favorite are the spit-grilled lamb al pastor. Chef Luis Perez's version of the chile-rubbed pork takes on the taste of slow-roasted, spiced shawerma with Mexi *sabor*, as slabs of lamb marinated in spices, achiote and vinegar are topped with pineapple, giving the lamb a delicious caramelized crust as it rotates over burning mesquite wood. *211 W. Second St., Santa Ana, (714) 972-1172, lolagaspar.com.*

CYNTHIA REBOLLEDO

CYNTHIA REBOLLEDO

ANEPALCO

Danny Godinez always has some awesome rotating tacos on his menu. The Chapman Avenue location's brunch menu currently features fish tacos, but as with most of Godinez's creations, these aren't average tacos de pescado. Bite into a handmade, berbaceous epazote tortilla encasing generous chunks of flaky red snapper encrusted in a Creole-like seasoning that's fried to a golden brown. It's all topped with a slaw of citrusy pico de gallo, purple cabbage, micro cilantro and pickled red onions and garnished with creamy cubes of avocado and thin slivers of crisp radish for that extra snap. A side of chile de arbol aioli is provided for dressing—take our advice and ask for extra—to which you'll add a heaping spoonful of smoky crema. *3737 Chapman Ave., Orange, (714) 456-9642, also at 415 S. Main St., Orange, (714) 771-2333, www.anepalco.com.*

BAJA FISH TACOS

We still don't know what it is that makes Baja Fish Tacos' pico de gallo so good, but it's addicting. The same goes for the shrimp tacos: plump shrimp sautéed in garlic butter and white wine; topped with cabbage relish, baja sauce and tangy cotija cheese, and served on a soft flour tortilla. Add a side of warm tortilla chips and call it a meal. *Various locations, bajafishtacos.com.*

» CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

RYAN SHEEHY

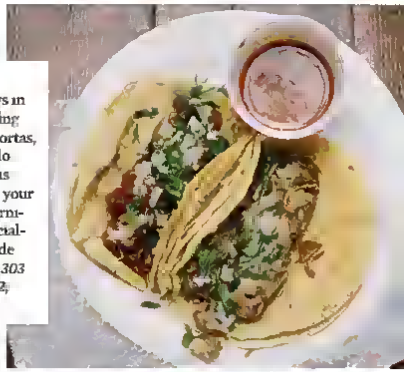
¡VIVA LOS TACOS!

» FROM PAGE 9

BRYAN SHEEHY

ALEBRIJES

One of our former editor-in-chief's favorite *loncheras* and ours, too, Alebrijes is the creator of the legendary Cuernavaca-forged taco acorazado, a.k.a. the battleship taco. We've written about this delicious behemoth numerous times, but here's a refresher: it's a massive corn tortilla *hecho a mano*, fluffy rice and meat. Alebrijes starts with breaded milanesa, adding grilled strips of nopal, creamy avocado and queso blanco, piling everything so big that the weight of the taco alone easily buckles the styrofoam platter it's served on. Be sure to come hungry; after smashing this gargantuan taco, you'll understand why another meal isn't necessary for the day. *100-198 W. Cubbon St., Santa Ana, (714) 655-3253*



EL CAMINO REAL

his Orange County institution draws in abachos and Mexicans alike by serving lassic, crowd-pleasing fare such as tortas, nchiladas, chile rellenos and menudo ut it's the fantastic tacos that keep us oing back for more. Here you'll find your raditional *taquería* meats—asada, carnitas, chorizo, as well as offals and specialties such as tacos dorados and birria de res—enveloped by two corn tortillas. *303 E. Euclid St., Fullerton, (714) 447-3962, www.elcaminorealmexicanfood.com.*

PHOTOS ABOVE AND BELOW BY BRYAN SHEEHY

TACO MESA

For 25 years, chef Ivan Calderon, the co-founder of Taco Mesa and Taco Rosa eateries, has proven himself more than just a chef and restaurateur. Calderon redesigned Taco Mesa's Orange location as a non-GMO *tortillería* and café, so he could accomplish his longtime goal of producing tortillas fresh, daily, free of preservatives and without exposure to chemicals. Despite the changes, the classic menu items remain intact, including our favorite blackened-calamari tacos: thick slabs of chile-coated calamari strips topped with cabbage relish, crema, cotija cheese and chipotle sauce, then served on one of those delicious housemade, non-GMO tortillas. *Various locations; www.tacomesa.com.*

SLAPFISH

From food truck to taking over the world one sustainable fish at a time, chef Andrew Gruel has kept the taste, integrity and flavors of his cuisine the same since Slapfish's humble beginnings—and that is why he's killing the franchise game right now. He created a modern beach shack known for its gigantic lobster rolls and chowder fries (natural-cut potatoes smothered in creamy clam chowder and bacon) while changing the way people eat seafood. As with everything he puts out, Gruel's food is big, messy and delicious, and his ultimate fish taco is no exception. The sea creature is battered, then fried until golden and crisp, served in a warm tortilla, and topped with cabbage, pickled onion and spicy awesome sauce. This two-handed taco—it looks as if you're eating a whole fish!—is a one-and-done kinda deal. *Various locations, www.slapfishrestaurant.com.*

ARIAN FEINZIMER

SEABIRDS KITCHEN

From luxe *lonchera* to brick-and-mortar and recently expanding to Long Beach, Seabirds continues to dish out delicious, seasonal, vegan fare. It appeals to vegans and non-vegans alike with dishes such as creamy butternut enchiladas stuffed with black beans and maitake mushrooms in a roasted pasilla pepper sauce; purple taquitos, filled with purple potatoes and topped with chipotle sour cream, fermented curtido and tangy almond feta, and ranchero tamales, stuffed with tender jackfruit and topped with red chile sauce, fermented cauliflower, frog hollow plums and hatch chiles. But it's Seabirds' beloved beer-battered avocado tacos that first caught our attention, with creamy avocado wedges enclosed in a crispy crust, then covered with cabbage, red onions and a spicy robust cream sauce dubbed Seabirds sauce. *2930 Bristol St., Costa Mesa, (714) 549-2584, also at 975 E. Fourth St., Long Beach, (562) 317-5545, www.seabirdskitchen.com.*

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On Sunday, January 28th 4th Street Wine and Long Beach Vegan present the Long Beach Vegan Chili Cook Off. Come on out and taste some great vegan chili and pair 'em up with some delicious specialty beers tapped just for the event. Visit lbvegan.com

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CAN WE HEAR "WALK LIKE A MAN"?

JOAN MARCUS

fri/01/19

[THEATER]

SEASONS' GREETINGS

Jersey Boys

Sure, for everything there is a season, but when it comes to *Jersey Boys*, the mega-smash-hit play based on the mega-smash-hit '60s group the Four Seasons, well, call this one evergreen. Going strong since 2005, *Jersey Boys* follows the rise and fall of an American pop group that managed to keep up with the British Invasion, chart-wise anyway, with songs such as "Sherry," "Big Girls Don't Cry," "Oh What a Night" and "Can't Take My Eyes Off You." But wholesome nostalgia this ain't—the show contains a fair dose of sex, drugs and dirty language, so maybe leave the kids at home.

Jersey Boys at Segerstrom Hall, 600 Town Center Dr., Costa Mesa, (714) 556-2787, www.scfta.org. 7:30 p.m., also Sat.-Sun. $40-$120. —ERIN DEWITT

MORE » ONLINE
OCWEEKLY.COM

[CONCERT]

Hometown Heroes

Tijuana Panthers

Part Beach Boulevard-style OC punk-pop and part precise and biting U.K. post-punk, Tijuana Panthers make music for fast cars on wide streets, but they write lyrics for dark days and moonless nights. That they covered the Kinks' "Father Christmas" makes perfect sense. It's fun, it's catchy, and it's not pretending everything is fine. It's a little angry, too, but that's the fun part. Tonight, they'll bring friends, this first show is with indie act Spendtime Palace, whose recent video is basically a Netflix original pilot, and Sweet Nobody, who split their sound between fuzzy pop and torchy ballads, while the second night features OC punk stalwarts Shattered Faith and Long Beach's psychedelic ranger Rudy De Anda.

Tijuana Panthers with Spendtime Palace and Sweet Nobody at the Constellation Room, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana, (714) 957-0600; www.observatoryoc.com. 7 p.m., also Sat. $15. —CHRIS ZIEGLER

sat/01/20

[PERFORMANCE]

BE TRANSFORMED

Representational Acts Performance Art Festival

As part of the Pacific Standard Time Festival Live Art LA/LA, the Representational Acts Performance Art Festival features three artists whose performances represent specific linguistic regions of the Caribbean. Representing Cuba is Carlos Martiel, whose work centers on social injustice and humanitarian unity. Trinidad's Ardil Gosine addresses the history of slavery and migration. And for Guadeloupe, Jimmy Robert blurs the distinctions between "modern" and "primitive" cultures. Collectively, these artists demonstrate how these regions can engage their audience far more effectively than passive depictions.

Representational Acts Performance Art Festival at the Museum of Latin American Art, 628 Alamitos Ave., Long Beach, (562) 437-1689; www.molaa.org. 5:30 p.m. $7-$10. —SCOTT FEINBLATT

[CONCERT]

Eclectic Electric

Dick Dale

Monarchy meets artistic anarchy in the iconic stylings of the "king" of the surf guitar, a left-handed 80-year-old Lebanese-American inventor and innovator whose breakthrough hit 50 years ago was a surfadelic version of a Greek rembetika song, "Misirlou." Weirdly, his interpretation of captivating Middle Eastern drone-tone and sway-inducing rhythm evoked hollow SoCal waves and the pulse of the sea. Through big hits and career ups and downs, wild creative interests came and went—yet always came again. Dick Dale's name signifies entire eras and genres. Head to the Coach House for "Peppermint Man," "Let's Go Trippin'," "Hava Nagilah" or whatever Dick chooses to showcase his visionary talents.

MORE » ONLINE
OCWEEKLY.COM

Dick Dale at the Coach House, 57 Camino Capistrano, San Juan Capistrano, (949) 496-8930; thecoachhouse.com. 8 p.m. $40. —ANDREW TONKOVICH

sun/01/21

[THEATER]

Dark Truths Uncovered

Black Coffee

Who but Agatha Christie could write mystery novels filled with such an indelible blend of intrigue and suspense? For those who don't have the time to sit down and enjoy one of her tomes (though you should), there are plenty of her works that have thankfully become adapted into theater plays, television shows and films. Long Beach Playhouse presents a stage adaptation of Christie's *Black Coffee*. The author's recurring master sleuth Hercule Poirot investigates the murder of a physicist who had previously developed a formula for the atomic bomb and must save the formula before it falls into the wrong hands. Don't miss a chance to see this thrilling work brought to life!

Black Coffee at Long Beach Playhouse, 5021 E. Anaheim St., Long Beach, (562) 494-1014, www.lbplayhouse.org. 2 p.m. Through Feb. 10. $14-$24. —AIMEE MURILLO

[FOOD & DRINK]

Brunch Bunch

Sunday Brunch

What's more relaxing than having a delightful brunch at Spaghettini while listening to some solid R&B tunes? Every Sunday, Spaghettini hosts beloved soul and R&B station 94.7 The Wave, who broadcast live from the restaurant while patrons dine on the scrumptious seafood buffet, Italian pastas, desserts, a wide variety of breakfast dishes, washing it all down with mimosas and other beverages. This experience is complemented by contemporary R&B band and Spaghettini regulars DW3, who perform live in the entertainment lounge. Come see what makes this weekly event so legendary.

Sunday Brunch at Spaghettini, 3005 Old Ranch Pkwy., Seal Beach, (800) 595-4849, spaghettini.com. 10 a.m. $60; children 10 and younger, $25. —AIMEE MURILLO

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mon/01/22

[TALKS]

Drink and Think

Science On Tap

Nothing says "science education" better than drinking a yeasty, crafty brew. That's why 1888 Center hosts a series of casual, moderated, scientific discussions at Provisions Market in Old Towne Orange, where the beer runs cold and the conversation runs hot. It's also where Chapman professor of psychology Laura Glynn is showing up tonight to educate one and all about the connections between biological, psychosocial and behavioral processes during human pregnancy, as well as their influences on fetal/child development. Because, again, nothing says "complex scientific analysis of fetuses" better than drinking five yeasty, crafty brews. [No fetuses will be harmed during this drinky conversation.]

Science on Tap at Provisions Market, 143 N. Glassell St., Orange, (657) 282-0483, 1888.center. 6 p.m. Free. —SR DAVIES

tue/01/23

[PERFORMING ARTS]

Balancing Act

Circa Ensemble: *Il Ritorno*

Australian acrobatics and performance company Circa Ensemble brings *Il Ritorno* to the Musco Center for one evening only, and it promises to be something truly special. Against a black wall, acrobats perform to the sounds of a live chamber ensemble playing Monteverdi's opera *Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria*. Each dancer moves independently of the others while trying to connect to one another to dramatize the ideas of desire, pain and loss, punctuated by war-torn memories. There's a small teaser video on the Musco site, if you're curious, but as with all artistic visions, it deserves to be seen in the flesh.

Circa Ensemble: *Il Ritorno* at Musco Center for the Arts at Chapman University, 1 University Dr., Orange, (844) 626-8726, muscocenter.org. 8 p.m. $23-$58. —AIMEE MURILLO

wed/01/24

[LECTURE]

Back Through Time

Maximus of Ephesus Lecture

Ever heard of the fella Maximus of Ephesus? Dr. James Rietveld has the scoop on this Roman-era philosopher and theurgic magician, which he'll share at this free lecture at Fullerton retailer Ipso Facto. Max taught Neoplatonist philosophy and gained influence as an adviser to Roman emperor Julian. As a theurgic magician, Max believed in ways to commune with gods through ritual actions, and his most significant achievement is said to have been animating a statue of the goddess Hecate. While his philosophies and magic arts got him in with emperors of the time, it also brought him a lot of trouble and tragedy. Learn all about this fascinating historical figure at this engaging lecture.

Maximus of Ephesus Lecture at Ipso Facto, 517 N. Harbor Blvd., Fullerton, (714) 525-7865, www.ipso-facto.com. 6 p.m. Free. —AIMEE MURILLO

[ART]

STAY GREEN 'LAND'

Since the beginning of time, humankind has had a fluctuating relationship with the Earth and its natural resources because of various advancements in industrialization and technology. Still, contemporary artists have persisted in calling our attention to that oscillating connection, and the Irvine Fine Arts Center's first exhibit of the year is a continuation of that study. "LAND" is a group show—featuring works by Jennifer Calio, Christine Nguyen, Christine Weir, Michael Nannery, Chris Natrop, Virginia Katz and Kiyomi Fukui—that dissects distinct environmental-related issues, from climate change to agriculture to mapping. It will certainly make you ponder your affect on our natural world a little harder.

"LAND" at the Irvine Fine Arts Center, 14321 Yale Ave., Irvine, (949) 724-6880, www.cityofirvine.org. 10 a.m. Through March 10. Free. —AIMEE MURILLO

thu/01/25

[TALKS]

BEATS BY STEW

Don't Box Me In: An Intimate Evening with Stewart Copeland

For many, Stewart Copeland is the drummer whose pulsating beats powered one of the biggest rock bands in history: The Police. But since the band's breakup, Copeland has built a catalog that expands beyond the rock world. In particular, he's become known for jazzy arrangements, and in 2013, he composed *The Tell-Tale Heart*, as commissioned by the Royal Opera House in London. That production's U.S. debut took place in Long Beach, and Copeland returns to the city for a one-night only Q&A about his life in music both as a rocker and composer. For big ballers, there's a VIP reception that allows you to get up-close-and-personal with music royalty.

MORE ONLINE
OCWEEKLY.COM

Don't Box Me In: An Intimate Evening With Stewart Copeland at Long Beach Opera Terrace Theater, 3029 E. South St., Long Beach, (562) 470-7464, www.longbeachopera.org. 6 p.m. $100; VIP reception, $200. —WYOMING REYNOLDS

LIFE MAGAZINE IMAGES

[LECTURE]

Yesteryear's Jams

Roaring 20s: Ain't We Got Fun

The music of the 1920s is so much more expansive than songs you can do the Charleston to. This was a time when motion pictures were silent; the Jazz Age was taking off; the Harlem Renaissance was reflecting African-American perspectives through art, poetry and music; and the Vaudeville circuit was giving way to songwriters and composers such as George Gershwin, Cole Porter, Irving Berlin and other jazz legends. Music historian Larry Maurer of the Timeless Melodies Foundation, which seeks to educate and preserve American music history, presents a lecture on the myriad song styles, hit genres and musical figures of the era.

Roaring 20s: Ain't We Got Fun at Bowers Museum, 2002 N. Main St., Santa Ana, (714) 567-3600, www.bowers.org. 1:30 p.m. $9-$12. —AIMEE MURILLO

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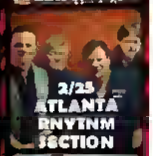

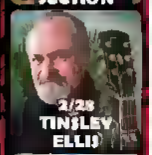

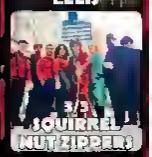

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3/17	ST. PATRICH'S OAY WITH THE FENIANS	4/20	OIXIE OREGS
3/18	JIM MESSINA	4/21	Y&T
3/23	REATLES vs STONES - A MUSICAL SHOWOOWN	4/22	WISHRONE ASH
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EDWIN GOEI

Riding High

Alta Baja Market serves comfort food that soothes and nourishes

BY EDWIN GOEI

I wasn't feeling great. Like a lot of people, I contracted the flu over the holidays and had been trying to shake its lingering effects for weeks. Thanks to a persistant cough, I craved soup almost constantly. Takeout pho, homemade chicken noodle, Olive Garden's zuppa toscana—if it seemed as if it could soothe my throat, I wanted it. Then, a few days after New Year's, as I was scrolling through Facebook, I saw a picture of pozole. It was from Alta Baja Market, and it looked perfect. It was the one soup I hadn't slurped throughout my illness, and that image of the brick-red brew—served on a plate with all the trimmings—called out to me. It also reminded me that although I'd reviewed all the 4th Street Market vendors when the downtown Santa Ana food hall opened three years ago, I hadn't been back since. More important, I hadn't tried Alta Baja, which opened a year after my visit.

Alta Baja Market—which specializes in goods from all over Southern California, the Southwest and Mexico, curated by owners Delilah Snell and Natasha Monereau—is also a café. And at 4th Street Market, it's the largest landmass in a sea of food-court vendors that dole out items in paper baskets and disposable bowls. Alta Baja is the only venue there where you can eat a real meal on actual plates with actual silverware. And unlike at the food court, sitting at one of Alta Baja's long picnic tables next to the windows, I felt as though I was eating at a country store somewhere along Route 66—far away from this bustling downtown hotspot surrounded by hipsters.

The menu is simple: egg dishes for breakfast, sandwiches for lunch and dinner. As for the pozole, I realized after reading the fine print on that Facebook post that it's only offered the last Sunday of the month. But it didn't matter. I wanted everything the menu offered—after all, breakfast food is comfort food.

After I placed my order, Snell asked if I wanted anything to drink. I told her I'd heard a lot about her micheladas, which are akin to Bloody Marys, but made with beer. Being a big fan of neither beer nor Bloody Marys, I opted for the passion-fruit michelada.

It was a revelation. Its closest equivalent is a mimosa without the harshness of champagne or tartness of OJ. But unlike that brunch-time excuse to imbibe, this drink was light, refreshing and invigorating instead of intoxicating. And with every gulp—after licking the chile powder from the rim of my glass—not only did I relive my last Hawaiian vacation, but the brew also hydrated my throat with its effervescence. I never thought a michelada could be the antidote to my cough, but on that morning, it made me feel better than I had in days.

I was tempted to order two more, but thankfully the solid food appeared. The blue corn-hatch chile cakes arrived with a thud, a cross between cornbread and hotcakes, the two pancakes were a savory lot. They were topped with two fried eggs and served alongside a side of salsa roja, crema and seasonal citrus. This was a massive meal.

Since it was already embedded with rounds of hatch chile, I didn't need to amp up the heat. But when Snell dropped off a gigantic squirt bottle labeled "Marge Sauce," I couldn't help myself. This fermented-green-chile concoction of her own making should come with a warning: The salsa was so addictive I covered every edible surface with it. And as my brow dampened and my pores opened up, I realized there's no better cure for what ails you than a surge of your own endorphins. I felt great. But most of all, these blue-corn cakes tasted good, warm and wholesome. It was food that doesn't make you feel like crap—important when you already feel crappy.

Since the pancakes were filling, I probably didn't need to order the chilaquiles, but I'm glad I did. Though not traditional in any sense, it, too, was a bowl full of warmth and comfort. The corn chips—which were cooked with heirloom beans and topped with fried eggs and sliced avocado—straddled that tenuous line between crisp and soggy. I also showered it with loads of Marge. And although I will have to wait until the end of the month to try the pozole, it seemed appropriate that a sauce that Snell named after her dog, Marge, who's named after *The Simpsons* matriarch, was one of the things that nurtured me to better health—or at least to a better mood.

ALTA BAJA MARKET

at 4th Street Market, 201 E. Fourth St., Santa Ana, (714) 783-2252, www.altabajamarket.com. Open Sun.-Thurs., 8 a.m.-7 p.m., Fri.-Sat., 8 a.m.-9 p.m. Dishes, $6-$8. Beer and micheladas.

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When Green Cheek Beer Co. opened last year with former Noble Ale Works brewer Evan Price as a partner and head brewer, the expectations were sky-high. As with his brilliant stint at Noble, Price is in a groove, releasing new beers and collaborating with other breweries, as well as perfecting the trendy hazy IPA. I can honestly say I wasn't a fan of the hazy style, but I have had some phenomenal ones lately, and I really believe our West Coast brewers are making what was originally an exclusively East Coast style of beer into a hybrid with even more hops and trademark juiciness and absolutely no bitter aftertaste.

Green Cheek currently offers three hazy IPAs. I enjoyed the Passionfruit Agenda (6.6 percent ABV), I've found that fruit to be among the most perfect to use in an IPA, as it's not too sweet and doesn't overwhelm. The Amarillo and simcoe hops add some pine and citrus notes, resulting in a full-flavored juice-and-hop bomb, fresh AF with a clean finish. I also had to try the Australian Pale, a 5.8 percent ABV double-dry-hopped ale with New Zealand cascade hops from Freestyle Farms. The New Zealand cascade hops are not as bitter as the U.S.'s, and the double-dry-hopping gives this pale ale a mild side. There's plenty of delicious flavor in this thirst quencher!

There are 15 beers on the Green Cheek menu, among them a Shandy, a blonde ale, a brown ale, even a michelada. Since Price is known for his IPAs, I had West in Peace, an 8.1 percent ABV double West Coast IPA, with Amarillo (my favorite!) and Citra hops—BOOM. Not for the faint of hop, this DIPA did not disappoint. It almost drinks like a triple IPA! I took my time enjoying every last sip.

LETTERS@OCWEEKLY.COM

CYNTHIA REBOLLEDO

Taco-mania!

Where to chow down on Tuesdays

BY CYNTHIA REBOLLEDO

Tacos are great every day of the week, but for some reason, they taste even better on Tuesdays, when you can score them at a discount. Here's a list of our favorite places to chow down on this united-in-taco-eating day.

HOLÉ MOLÉ
Voted Best Taco Tuesday of 2017! While there's asada, chicken, carnitas, al pastor and shrimp, it's the fish you want. "Not only are the fish pieces individually hand-dipped in batter, then fried into crispy cocoons any British chip shop would envy, but Hole Mole also complements them with a self-serve trough filled with hot-from-the-fryer, spice-dusted, deep-fried yellow chiles that are free for the taking." *14430 Newport Ave., Tustin, (714) 505-2502, www.holemole.com.*

EL CANTARITO
An oldie but a goodie, this tiny Mexican outpost in the heart of old town Placentia offers one of the best old-school deals, with $1 tacos and free chips and salsa. Come Tuesday, El Cantarito is packed with local *gente*, famished college students and gracious-living residents looking for their Mexi fix. Choices include the classics, asada, chorizo, carnitas, birria, al pastor and pollo. *120 W. Santa Fe Ave., Placentia, (714) 528-6090.*

TACO MESA
Treat yo'self to $1.75 al pastor, carnitas, chile verde (pork), veggie, shredded beef, chicken and Baja-style fish tacos all day long. Chef Ivan Calderon, co-founder of Taco Mesa and Taco Rosa eateries, is passionate about promoting "healthy and authentic" Mexican cuisine; he offers non-GMO tortillas and uses organic greens, sustainable meats and wild-caught fish, taking his tacos to the next level. *Various locations, www.tacomesa.com.*

LOLA GASPAR
When chef Luis Perez fires up the outdoor grill, the aroma of charred meat and burning mesquite fills Lola Gaspar's patio. He uses El Metate tortillas to envelop fillings such as tiger prawn and chorizo in salsa borracha, succulent carnitas, and jerk-spiced fish—all of which are great. But what you should be ordering is whatever Perez has cooking on the open fire, especially the trompo. The delicious *desmadre* starts at 6 p.m. on Tuesdays and continues until they run out—*¡provecho! 211 W. Second St., Santa Ana, (714) 972-1172, lolagaspar.com.*

ALL THE *LONCHERAS* IN SANTA ANA
Every day in Santa Ana is taco Tuesday! Our go-to *loncheras* include Alebrije's, creator of the legendary Cuernavaca-forged taco acorazado, Los Reyes Del Elote, which offers the usual carne staples and offals, and Tacos Ruben, with its tacos dorados de papa—crispy potato tacos covered in a comforting, savory tomato broth. *Multiple locations throughout Santa Ana.*

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EDWIN GOEI

Cuter Than Boba

Cheesecake at L'uxweet

EATTHISNOW
» EDWIN GOEI

Boba is bigger than ever these days. In *Crazy Ex-Girlfriend*, the main characters don't commiserate at a coffeehouse à la Central Perk, they go to a place called Cup of Boba. And in Tustin, a city that 20 years ago didn't have a single boba shop, there are now at least five.

The newest is called L'uxweet, which is aimed at an Asian audience despite being located in a part of town where very few Asian people live. Among its offerings is a brown sugar milk tea to which you can add egg pudding along with tapioca pearls to make a concoction similar to what Half & Half does in Rowland Heights.

But L'uxweet also puts out a menu that has Taiwanese-style egg pancakes, baos, sub sandwiches, and toasts stuffed with griddled meat and eggs. My favorite non-boba item at the moment is a so-called cheesecake that's so fluffy and eggy it borders on soufflé. In fact, you may not even consider it a cheesecake if you're judging by the American definition. But I liked it. And it comes in its own cute box with its own cute spoon, which, I admit, made me like it that much more. Yes, boba is here to stay, but so, too, are all its fringe benefits.

L'UXWEET
12932 Newport Ave , Ste. 7, Tustin, (714) 894-3108, www.luxweet.com

DRINKOFTHEWEEK
» ROBERT FLORES

Sierra Nevada Celebration IPA at the Pizza Press

The first Pizza Press opened in Anaheim in 2012, and it has since expanded across Southern California and beyond. Diners are encouraged to publish (create) their own pizza or pick from one of the restaurant's signature pies, which are named after big-city rags such as *The Times*, *The Herald* and *The Sun*. You can pair your meal with one of more than two dozen craft beers on tap, which rotate regularly by season and region. While checking out the recently opened Pizza Press in the historic Rankin Building (built in 1917) in downtown Santa Ana, I opted for a Celebration.

THE DRINK
Established in 1979 by homebrewers Ken Grossman and Paul Camusi in Chico, Sierra Nevada would become one of the pioneers of modern day craft beer. Its first batch of Celebration (6.8 percent ABV) IPA was brewed in 1981, using Chinook, Cascade and Centennial hops. Some fans of the seasonal beer swear Sierra Nevada adds cinnamon and nutmeg, but it's actually the malt that gives you those flavors of warmth. Celebration is bold with intense aromas of citrus and pine, keeping the spirit of the season alive.

ROBERT FLORES

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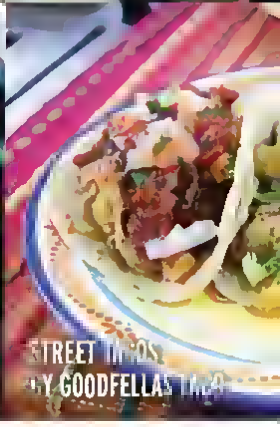

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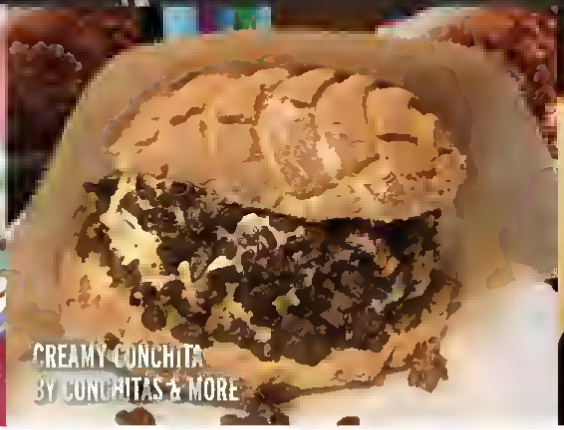

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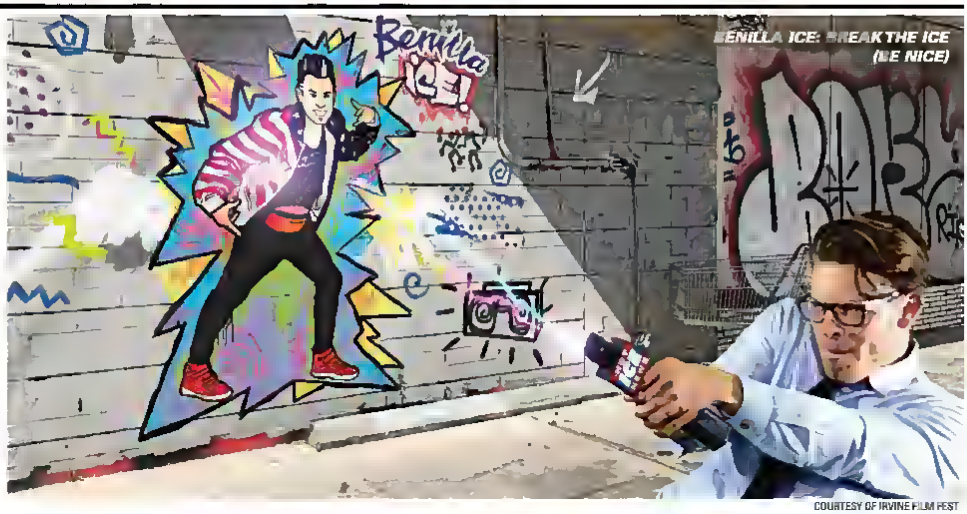
Big-Screen Dreams

Welcome to the 2018 Irvine Film Festival . . . in Costa Mesa

BY MATT COKER



BENILLA ICE: BREAK THE ICE (BE NICE)

COURTESY OF IRVINE FILM FEST

Filmmakers look for any attention their movies can get at festivals around the country. (If it's attention from a potential distributor, all the better!) However, as an audience member, I often wonder why the festival film I am consuming is up on a big theater screen as opposed to a family-room flat-screen, a computer monitor or a cellphone screen.

This is particularly the case for socially conscious documentaries, which often seem to have been shot directly for boxy TV screens. I kept this in mind while looking over the schedule for the seventh-annual Irvine Film Festival, which opens Thursday, Jan. 25, and continues daily through Jan. 31—not in Irvine, but in Costa Mesa.

Fortunately, I came across a feature film that most definitely must be seen on a big screen. Polish director Mariusz Palej's ***Behind the Blue Door***, a family adventure fantasy about a young recovering car-accident victim discovering a portal to a new reality. Based on a best-selling Polish children's book, the gorgeously shot and imagined movie has a story told from the point of view of 11-year-old Łukasz (Dominik Kowalczyk), who is in a car on the way to a holiday with his mother (Magdalena Niec) when a violent accident places both in a hospital.

Łukasz is put into a coma, and Palej has explained that the audience, like the boy, are unaware he is actually dreaming his waking moments that will follow. Believing his mother is still unconscious at the hospital, Łukasz is taken to a guest house called "High Cliff," which appears to have been plucked from a classic Anglo-Saxon horror film. There he finds a mysterious blue door, behind which is a surreal world. The changing realities can be compared to the black-and-white Kansas and multicolored Land of Oz in *The Wizard of Oz*, which, like *Behind the Blue Door*, is best experienced on the biggest possible movie screen to inflate the drama and shallow the viewer.

Jack Kaprielian says the 70 films at this year's festival were chosen from 1,400 submissions. Other narrative features over the seven days include ***Lovers***, Italian director Matteo Vicino's romantic dramedy that centers on five characters and four connected stories; ***The Isle***, Matthew Butler Hart's horror flick about three sailors surviving a crash into a nearly deserted Scottish island, only to discover their new home has a strange past; ***Lasso***, Evan Cecil's slasher flick set at a remote rodeo; and ***Fitzer (Streaker)***, Swiss-born German director Peter Lunzi's comedy about a high-school teacher trying to get out of a financial fix by recruiting nude competitors for illegal sports betting.

The festival also includes these feature-length documentaries: ***The Iconoclast***, King Adz's harrowing look at art smuggler Michel van Rijn; ***ET Contact They Are Here***, actress/filmmaker Caroline Cory's long-form debut based on people's alien encounters; ***Out of State***, Ciara Lacy's sober study of native Hawaiian inmates shipped to an Arizona for-profit prison; ***Becoming Iconic***, in which Neal Thibedeau shoots actor/filmmaker/entrepreneur Jonathan Baker talking with such directors as Jodie Foster, Taylor Hackford and Adrian Lyne; ***Poisoning Paradise***, in which Teresa Tico and Keely Shaye Brosnan (wife of actor/executive producer Pierce) chronicle native Hawaiians struggling with environmental damage to their islands; and ***State of Exception***, for which Canadian documentarian Jason O'Hara embedded himself with Rio de Janeiro "urban Indians" for six years as they fought forced evictions before the 2014 FIFA World Cup and 2016 Summer Olympics.

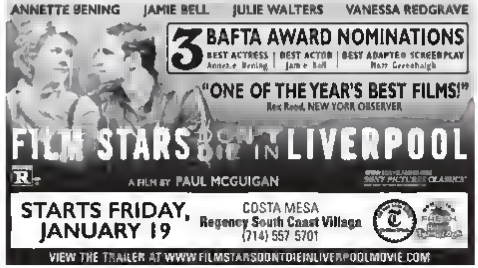
Short films open some feature film programs. There are also 17 separate programs with collections of multiple fictional and documentary shorts. Three that sound intriguing are:

- ***The Prince***, UC Irvine Claire Trevor School of Arts MFA alum Kyra Zagorsky's directorial debut from her own story, based on an incident of Islamic profiling that hit her own family. "I wrote the first draft of this script before the 2016 presidential election, and it was relevant," Zagorsky explains. "Post-election, it's not only relevant, but also necessary." *The Prince* rolls during the later Thursday, Jan. 25, shorts program.
- ***Benilla Ice: Break the Ice (Be Nice)***, Lake Arrowhead director Ben Beitzel's novelty music video, which he also produced and co-wrote. Parodying old-school rappers and '90s music videos, the piece was made "with virtually no budget and an entirely volunteer crew," says Beitzel. "[It] delivers a simple but important message to just be kind to one another." It's shown during the noon Jan. 27 shorts program.
- ***Knife Skills***, from Emmy- and Academy Award-winning documentarian Thomas Lennon, who arrived at his latest film's subject after he met Brandon Chrostowski. About to open "the greatest French restaurant in the United States" in Cleveland, Chrostowski would fully staff what was eventually named Edwins with recent prison parolees. "I knew within five or 10 seconds," Lennon says, "that there was a potential film there." Longer than most shorts at 40 minutes, *Knife Skills* is part of the late program Jan. 29.

Cecil, Beitzel, Tico, Brosnan, Hart and Cory are among the many filmmakers expected to attend their screenings for audience Q&As.

MCOKER@OCWEEKLY.COM

IRVINE FILM FESTIVAL
at Starlight Triangle Square Cinemas, 1870 Harbor Blvd., Costa Mesa, (949) 800-6163; www.irvinefilmfest.com. Opens Thurs., Jan. 25, 4 p.m. (shorts program), 8 p.m. (*Lovers*), and 8 p.m. (shorts program). Continues daily through Jan. 31, see website for show times. $10 per program, all-day pass, $30; seven day pass, $200.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Midsummer Melancholia

An adult take on the Peter Pan story lights up *Dear Brutus*

BY JOEL BEERS

There are sound reasons why any red-blooded, Kentucky Fried Chicken-eating American should be wary of the play *Dear Brutus*. For one, it's so damn English, from the dorky accents and tea cups to the stuffy parlour-room setting and, well, those accents. And then there's its inspiration: Shakespeare's enchanted forest from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, which just sounds like a bad idea.

And, of course, there's the playwright: J.M. Barrie, a Scottish-born writer who in 1904 unleashed upon an unsuspecting world the story of Peter Pan, and we all know the atrocities left in its wake (grown women playing young boys, to begin with). Not to mention the rather unsavory aspects of Barrie's mentoring (i.e., stalking and psychological manipulation) of children, which would no doubt put him on some kind of internet list of shitty men in 2018.

So why, then, is this STAGEStheatre production of Barrie's 1917 play so curiously affecting and poignant, even profound? One reason could be its relative freshness. Sure, it's 100 years old, but until last year, it existed in relative obscurity, rarely produced and, when recognized, written off as just another work by the Peter Pan guy. But in 2017, productions started popping up in the U.K. and the States, with many troupes calling it a "lost masterpiece."

And while it is *sooooo* tempting to type that this is one "masterpiece" that deserved to stay lost, the reality is there's a great deal to chew on in this 100-minute drama, one that is whimsical and fantastic at times, but free of cloying sentiment. Written at a time when the notion of children escaping into a magical realm where they never grow up no longer seemed so potent (a world war has a tendency to put things into perspective), there is a darkness and melancholy to this piece that elevates it above its rather pedestrian set-up. It feels like a play for grown-ups, the kind of grown-ups who possess self-reflection and the gnawing sense their lives haven't quite turned out the way they imagined they would.

A mysterious elderly horticulturist, Loh (a manically over-the-top Paul Burt), has invited three married couples and two single women to his home on Midsummer's Eve. Who they or Loh truly are, or why they have been invited, is never clear, but it is apparent that most are unhappy. There's a lovers' triangle undermining one marriage, another ravaged by alcoholism and lack of children, and even the apparently content older couple has something going on beneath the surface. Again, what that is isn't clear, as Barrie is less concerned with characterization than he is with sticking these people into a mysterious forest that manifests just one night a year at different locations in the countryside. While his servant tells the group they should not enter the forest, Loh gleefully proclaims it will give all who venture inside a second chance, something for which most of the characters yearn.

COURTESY OF STAGESTHEATRE

So, through the window they crawl, and into the forest they go, and they are transformed. A failed, childless artist now has a career and a daughter; the lovers' triangle is reset; and for some inexplicable reason, an older guy trollops through the woods channeling Ron Burgundy, flautist.

There is also one new character introduced, a young girl, Margaret (played by 9-year-old Scarlett Cook). Cook is a spark-plug, one of the few performers, along with Andy Clark's philandering Will, who exhibits much stage presence. Most of Alexis Stary's cast too often telegraph choices, and frequently, it feels as if the actors are in their own plays.

That, along with some static staging (this enchanted forest looks and sounds about as enchanting as an alley behind some London row houses festooned with drying laundry), works against this production, as does Barrie's flimsy character development and yawning plot holes. But the production does strike at the heart of Barrie's words. Instead of a world in which no one grows up, we find ourselves in one in which no one can truly change. Even when the characters return from the forest and slowly realize everything had been a temporary group Happening, most do not feel invigorated or inspired. Instead, they just seem sad.

So it's ironic that the most optimistic and imaginative character is one who doesn't exist. Margaret even seems to realize it, at one point stamping her feet and exclaiming that she doesn't want to be a "might-have-been." It's a devastating line, as the actress is so charming and lively, and the character the only one with a chance to live the life she wants, though it's a chance she'll never have. The fantasy of *Peter Pan* has grown up in *Dear Brutus*, and it's little wonder why Disney hasn't snatched up the latter. Yet.

DEAR BRUTUS

at STAGEStheatre, 400 E. Commonwealth Ave., Fullerton, (714) 525-4484; www.stagesoc.org. Fri.-Sat., 8 p.m., Sun., 2 p.m. Through Feb. 11. $20-$22.

TrendZilla

» AIMEE MURILLO

Beauty Wins

The first Blush Con makeup convention took up space as part of the larger Asian American Expo this past weekend at Pomona Fairplex. Although not as large as such makeup and style conventions as Phame Expo, Style Con or Beauty Con, there were still panel discussions, meet-and-greets with beauty bloggers and influencers, and plenty of great vendors introducing innovative skincare products. From vegan nail polish to clay masks, here are my favorites.

Kaya Essentials. Young entrepreneur Sara Beatriz Meredith started her own lip-balm company in which all of the products are handmade with organic, healthy ingredients in flavors such as lemongrass, honey and coconut, lavender, and calamansi, a fruit rarely seen outside the Philippines. Sales of Meredith's balms also fund meals for children in that country through Kitchen of Care. *www.kayaessentials.com.*

So Natural™. This Korean beauty line includes a carbonic-bubble clay mask (in which the cream lightly inflates on your skin after it's applied) and facial powder that keeps skin looking matte and fresh. And the All Day Tight setting spray gave my face a dewy glow after a light spritz. True to its name, all products are made from natural ingredients. *sonaturalusa.com.*

Nail & Bone. Buy some of this vegan, cruelty-free nail polish, and 20 percent of the proceeds helps rescue dog organizations! *nailandbone.com.*

Neal's Yard Remedies. Vitamin skin serums are all the rage right now, and the Rose Facial Oil promises to restore your skin's radiance. This U.K.-based line includes everything from hand washes to body butters that nourish your skin while you sleep. *us.nyrorganic.com.*

Melanie Mills Hollywood. Makeup isn't only for your face! You can use Melanie Mills Hollywood's shimmery foundation on not only your face, but also your extremities, and everything will be glittery without streaks. *melaniemillshollywood.com.*

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CHICANO BATMAN: SUITEO FOR SUCCESS

JESUE RIVAS

Year of the Reverse Crossover

The success of today's Latin artists moves music further toward its multicultural future

BY SARAH BENNETT

There's a scene in the 2017 documentary *Residente* in which the titular Puerto Rican rapper tells a story about his dislike for a childhood staple. "When I was a kid, I didn't like milk, so my mom would put a little bit of chocolate into it," the artist born René Pérez Joglar tells a traditional Siberian folk singer. "Eventually, she put less and less chocolate in, and soon, I didn't need any chocolate at all. We're doing that."

Joglar was referring to traditional folk music, which the former Calle 13 rapper chased (along with his own genetics) around the world, but he might as well have been talking about Latin music, too.

If 2016 was the year that a disturbing portion of the American electorate told Latinos they do not belong in this country by voting for Donald Trump, then 2017 was the year that notion was sonically repelled, as sounds from across the Spanish-speaking diaspora were deposited directly into American pop culture. From indie rock to hip-hop to global pop, Spanish-first artists questioned, then shattered the confines of the unfairly broad "Latin" category, propelling beats once found on Caribbean dance floors and at South American rock shows into their music. This was the year America acknowledged its blessed messiness and embraced—in its musical, if not political, choices—the inevitable multicultural, bilingual future.

But while so many year-end wrap-up stories applauded the stateside success of songs such as "Despacito" (by Luis Fonsi and Daddy Yankee, featuring Justin Bieber in the remix), the most successful foreign-language song on the Billboard chart ever, and "Mi Gente" (by J Balvin and Willy William, featuring Beyoncé), still topping Billboard's Hot 100, all of them failed to appreciate what is organically bubbling from the underground on the West Coast.

In California, Latin music isn't changing the culture, but rather the Latin culture is changing the music. Cumbia has always been worshipped more than reggaeton, a result of our dominant Mexican and Central American populations, whose influence is far more profound than anything from the Caribbean. After all, the land we stand on was once Mexico. And over the past few years, young Latino musicians have been taking the culture and music that pulses through the streets of Orange County and beyond—from West Coast hip-hop to banda to surf rock to lo-fi garage and more—and remixing it using a distinctly Mexican-American bias.

Just as salsa expressed the frenetic experience of being an Afro-Latino immigrant in New York, the experience of living a SoCal Mexican-American identity has taken on a Latin-alternative *sazón*, canonized with national tours, regional festivals and even its own stage at Coachella.

Bands such as Buyepongo, whose name is the Spanish translation of a Wu-Tang Clan reference, defy easy categorization. All the members grew up in Hispanic-majority Compton on steady diets of hip-hop and Vicente Fernández. Their influences inspired them to create their own attitude-heavy booty-shakers by pulling from Fela Kuti and Honduran punta, a new album, *Tumbalo*, came out in November.

Thee Commons are from East LA, but they sound more like a Growlers album played while waiting in the border-crossing line. Noodling surf rock mingles with gritty cumbia rhythms and psychedelic chicha riffs under David Pacheco's shapeshifting sonidero vocals ("*Ni de aquí, ni de allá, pero aquí nos vamos a quedar*," he sings on the band's latest album, *Paleta Sonora*).

There are already OGs of this new scene, including Chicano Batman, which sprang from La Mirada (via South America) to headline major festivals around the world. Newcomers such as Cuco, an awkward sadboy Soundcloud singer from Hawthorne, and Jasper Bones, another vaporwave crooner, both spent 2017 racking up streams and making teen girls swoon.

The year was also good to artists such as Kali Uchis, a Colombian R&B artist with a voice as silky as her style, powerhouses that double as talent scouts such as Qvolé Collective and the all-female DJ collective Chulita Vinyl Club (and resident Latinx MCs), and the LA-based scene devoted to Peruvian chicha, which will have its own all-day celebration in March.

On the festival side, the long-running, homegrown Viva! Pomona, which never made any distinctions between what's Latin and what's not, finally gave way to wider reaches. With the help of Viva! Presents' Rene Contreras, Coachella organized a last-minute Sonora Stage dedicated to this ethos. November's Tropicalia proved that a daylong fest co-headlined by Los Tigres Del Norte and Jhene Aiko not only made money, but it made sense, too.

These kinds of conversations will only get louder as the connections between Latinx bands across the entire SoCal border region begin to solidify. Local Mexican-American artists such as Rudy de Anda often cross to play the bars of La Sexta in Tijuana, and Tijuana's lo-fi garage kings Policías y Ladrones have been gigging in parts farther north for years, leaving plenty of room in this growing scene for groups such as Los Shadows, a San Diego outfit of border kids who played their first LA show at Redwood Bar in December.

If anything, 2017 used a little bit of sonic chocolate to expose the wild diversity of Latin music and identity to audiences across the country. It's not just Enrique Iglesias, it's not just Jenni Rivera, and it's not just reggaeton. It's something that's been bubbling in Will Smith's Bomba Estéreo cameos and at showcases inside Alex's Bar, quietly spiking our milk until we don't need to be spoon-fed anymore, until Latin music is just in our daily lives, on our streets and in so many other slices of SoCal culture.

From our perch in Southern California, there is no new Latin invasion, no Latin explosion and no Latin boom. This is not a trend. People from Latin America already call it American music. Maybe we should, too.

LETTERS@OCWEEKLY.COM

TAYLOR HAMBY

Beatles for Sale

After 30 years in business, Pepperland Music laid waste

BY TAYLOR HAMBY

About this time last year, this infernal rag published an article informing readers that the reports of Pepperland Music's death were greatly exaggerated. We erroneously reported in the obituary of notable open-mic host and musician John Carrillo that the longtime record store/music shop/music lesson studio in Orange was defunct. The author ("someone whose last name in Spanish is *cervezas*") not only issued a retraction in the original story, but also wrote a full article to set the record straight, as it were, on just how alive and well the 36-year-old shop was.

Until it wasn't.

I normally wouldn't point out my colleagues' gaffes publicly, but I'm making an exception here because "Joel [Beers] was a bit of a soothsayer in that respect," according to Pepperland owner Mike Lefebvre. The store, open since 1982, is now closing because, as Lefebvre puts it, "after a third of a century, it's time to retire."

The 67-year-old splits his time between Orange County and his home in Colorado, but after about a decade, Lefebvre is over the back-and-forth. He's ready to settle in and spend more time with his wife and children. "The store does well, but my children are too young to take it over, and my two boys that are older have their own careers," he explains. "Not that they're not interested, but they are busy doing their own thing."

Three and a half decades and three locations around Orange have given Lefebvre and the music community a lifetime of memories. "No 1 is the customers," he says. "You make a lot of friends."

The shop's clientele has been a diverse group of professional musicians, would-be musicians, musicians in training and music fans. Lefebvre falls into the latter group. "I'm not a musician," he admits. "I figured for every musician out there, there has to be an audience, and that's me."

And quite the fan he is. Lefebvre opened Pepperland initially as a way to downsize his extensive record collection. The store grew from there: guitars, equipment, memorabilia, novelty items, books, sheet music, Pepperland-branded retro fuel pump. "I do tend to overbuy and sell," Lefebvre concedes. "That's why we have so much stuff here to move."

Of course, the famous musicians Pepperland Music's most synonymous with are the Beatles. The Fab Four have been just as much a part of the store's history as Lefebvre himself. First, there's the name—Pepperland was the name of the musical, mystical land where Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club band lived in the animated film *Yellow Submarine* and the name of a track used several times in the flick (along with "Pepperland Laid Waste"). It's an association so well-known Lefebvre was even offered the chance to buy the legendary Cavern Club in Liverpool, an incubator for the early days of the band. He declined the offer but did point the former owners in the direction of the current owners.

The store is peppered with Beatles albums and memorabilia, from 30-year-old Beatles convention booklets to rare framed posters to shirts and books all dedicated to the Fab Four. And that's just the Beatles stuff.

Pepperland is so full of, well, everything that Lefebvre called in a professional to help liquidate with an "everything must go" sale. It's an incremental sale, starting with 50 percent off everything and discounts rising each week. They're putting out fresh stock daily as they sort through the extensive collection. The sale is going on now and will continue until everything's gone—"We hope by the end of the month," explains the sale's organizer, Amanda Ellis. "Between the middle and the end of January."

But should anyone want to buy the whole shebang, the case for keeping Pepperland alive is there—after all, it's an Orange County institution. "The thing is this area does not have any music stores," Lefebvre explains. "There's nothing left."

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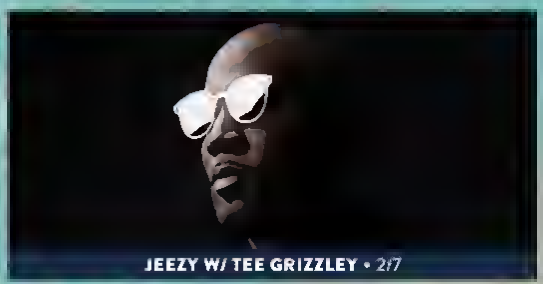
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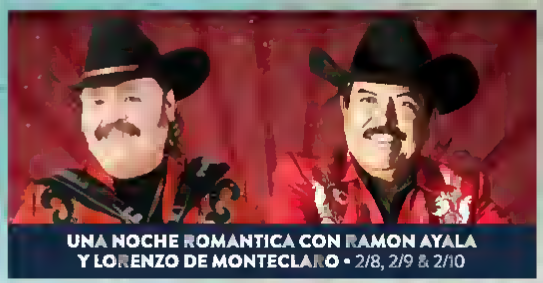
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Heart-Shaped Comp

Original Suburban Legends front man Tim Maurer recently reteamed with his fellow founding band member Vincent Walker for a special project. Recording under the name Walki-Talki, they're producing 15 new tunes to raise funds for Puerto Rico, which was devastated last year after two hurricanes. Joining them in representing Orange County on *Arecibo Songs for Puerto Rico* are Kiev and Wetwood Smokes. The album, which consists of songs from SoCal-area bands, is available for $10 via www.pledgemusic.com/projects/afdr, with all proceeds benefitting the Friends of Puerto Rico organization (www.friendsofpuertorico.org) and its disaster-relief efforts.

The project came about while the 131ers singer Kaleb Davies and drummer Ryan Dawson were on vacation in San Juan, Puerto Rico, and Hurricane Irma hit. The two joined up with locals and their roommates to ride out the storm at a hostel. After they returned to California, Hurricane Maria descended upon the island. Davies and Dawson then returned to the island to survey the damage. One area whose beauty the duo had previously relished was Arecibo. It was in the wreckage of this northern-coastal municipality that they were inspired to help through their music, founding Artists for Disaster Relief.

The 131ers are part of a tightknit community of musicians and artists, many of whom have collaborated with one another at some point, Maurer explains. "From what I understand, the word of [the project] got out, and more and more people wanted to participate." Bands started paying a visit to the Torrance-based band, where they have a music space and recording studio, to lay down some tracks.

As for the reunion of the onetime Suburban Legends band mates, 131ers bassist Chris Graue says, "Vince was already helping us produce our record, so he was excited to hear [about the Puerto Rico project] and wanted to put something together. One day, Tim stopped by our warehouse to hang out, and we just sort of convinced them they should do a song together. … What came out was great, and we're extremely proud of our friends and the place they cooked up in our little Torrance studio. It really only took minimal peer pressure, those two have an electric chemistry that, both personally and professionally, appears to have taken no time off in 15 years."

Walki-Talki's contribution to the album, a song titled "Made for Living," is not a ska tune. But it is a solid track that fits nicely into the album's collection of eclectic indie-rock tunes. "It's definitely a different track than folks are used to [from us]," Maurer says. "It's definitely more of a mature song."

Maurer revealed that there may be a future for Walki-Talki. "I've been writing music alongside Vince since 1997, and the fact that after all these years, we can come back and still have creative connections … it's nice," he says. "It's very refreshing. … This song came about so effortlessly, so organically, that it definitely gives us a reason to create much more music in the future."

LocalsOnly
» SCOTT FEINBLATT

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Bloody Business

I'm a professional dominatrix, and I thought I'd seen everything in the past five years. But this situation completely baffled the entire dungeon. This middle-aged guy, seemingly in fine health, booked an appointment with me and my colleague for one hour of some very light play and a golden shower to finish off with. We did no CBT, no cock rings, no trauma to the dick area at all, no ass play, no sounding or catheters—so turbulent masturbation, nothing that could have caused this reaction. We brought him into the bathroom, and he laid down on his back, jerking off with a condom on his penis as my buddy was standing over him and peeing and I was saying all kinds of mean/encouraging sentiments and closely observing his progress. He came, and—it was entirely blood. It looked like he shat into his condom, through his penis. He did not seem alarmed or in pain. He took off his condom himself, so he was aware of the situation. He did not remark on it to either of us! He made ZERO effort to prepare either of us, either. And it was not a little blood or his ejaculate—it was entirely blood. He has never returned. Is this person a monster or a vampire? Is he dying? Seriously

Mistress Echo

P.S. I went back to the bathroom with gloves on and removed the used condom from the trash and took a photo. It's the only way to communicate just how much blood there was.

"You can tell Mistress Echo that her client was not a monster or a vampire, and he is likely not dying any time soon," said Dr. Stephen H. King, a board-certified urologist. "What she observed is a person with hematospermia, meaning blood in the semen."

While the sight is alarming—I'll never be able to scrape that photo off the back of my eyeballs, thanks—Dr. King assures me it's nothing to worry about, as hematospermia is almost always benign. And even if you had done ball play or rough CBT (cock-and-ball torture), or if he engaged in solo CBT prior to the session, it's unlikely that kind of play would result in a condom full of blood.

"The vast majority of the semen actually comes from the prostate and the seminal vesicles, which are located deep in the pelvis just behind and below the bladder, respectively," said Dr. King. "Very little of the ejaculate fluid actually originates from the testicles," which primarily pump out hormones and sperm cells. "The prostate gland and seminal vesicles (also glands) store up the fluids and can become overdistended with long periods of abstinence and prone toward micro tearing and bleeding in this circumstance."

Blowing regular loads doesn't just lower your risk for prostate cancer, as multiple studies have shown, but it also lowers your risk for filling condoms with blood and alarming your friendly neighborhood pro-Dom. Two good reasons for draining those balls, guys—and other people with balls because, as the Book of Tumblr teaches us, not all guys have balls, and not all balls have guys.

"Also, these glands are lined by smooth muscle that contracts to force out the fluid [during ejaculation]," Dr. King continued. "If the force of contraction is excessive—a fucking great orgasm—this may lead toward rupture of some of the surrounding blood vessels and blood will enter the semen."

Your client's bliss reaction is a good indication that he's experienced this previously. ME, because most guys who see blood in their semen—or only blood when they expected to see semen—freak the fuck out.

"In my practice, most guys who see blood in their ejaculate the first time are sufficiently freaked out to seek immediate medical attention, and their doctors usually tell them this isn't something to worry about—unless it persists," said Dr. King. "In cases where the hematospermia persists, gets worse, or is associated with other symptoms such as pain, difficulty urinating, or general health decline, medical attention is definitely recommended."

Back to your client, ME. If blood loads have happened to him before (hence the blase reaction), proper etiquette dictates that he should have said something to you about it afterward ("I'm fine, no biggie"). If it happens to him regularly, he should have warned you in advance—at least that's what it says in my imaginary edition of *Emily Post's Etiquette*.

I'm an old guy, 68 years old to be exact. (Also a Scorpio, if that matters.) I've always been a pretty horny person, and I had a lot of fun from the 1960s through the 1980s with a number of lovers. I figured that as I got older my horniness would lessen and I could think about something other than pussy. Trouble is, I don't seem to be less horny. I find myself attracted to women in their 30s or 40s, but I wonder how I appear to them. I don't want to make an utter fool of myself by making an unwanted advance—but the truth is, I'm still pretty hot to trot. What do I do?

Not Ready For The Nursing Home

You could see sex workers (quickest fix), you could look for women in their 30s or 40s who are attracted to guys pushing 70 (gerontophilia is a thing), you could date women in their 50s or 60s with a youthful appearance and/or attitude (there are lots out there, NRFTNH), and they often gather in groups to complain about how men their age are only interested in much younger women), or you could do all of the above. But you shouldn't regard moving into a nursing home as the end of your sex life, NRFTNH. I'm constantly reading news reports about sexually-transmitted-disease epidemics in nursing homes and retirement communities. People may not like to think about the elderly having sex—and the elderly apparently don't think about protection (or they're denied access to it)—but lots of old fuckers are still fucking. (And, as astrology is bullshit, NRFTNH, being a Scorpio doesn't matter. It never has, and it never will.)

My husband has a foot fetish. The feel of his tongue between my toes when he "worships" my feet doesn't arouse me in the least. Rather, it feels like I'm stepping on slugs in the garden barefoot. Our sex life is fine otherwise. I resolved to grin (or grimace) and bear this odd aspect of his sexuality before we married, but I cannot continue to do so. When I told him this, he wished to be allowed to attend "foot model" parties. There wouldn't be intercourse, but he would pleasure himself in the presence of these foot models (and other males!). This would, in my opinion, violate our monogamous commitment and our marriage vows. I enjoy your podcast, and I know you often advocate for open relationships. But you also emphasize your respect for monogamy and the validity of monogamous commitments. We are at an impasse. Please advise.

Throwing Off Expectations

While "love unconditionally" sounds nice, TOE, monogamy was a condition of yours going into this marriage (and a valid one), and being able to express this aspect of his sexuality was a stated or implicit condition of his (and, yes, an equally valid one). If you're going to unilaterally alter the terms and conditions of your marriage, TOE, than you'll need to reopen negotiations and come to a new agreement with your husband...one that works for both of you. (Jesus, lady, let him go to the fucking party!)

On the Lovecast *(savagelovecast.com), Dan chats with Cecile Richards, president of Planned Parenthood. Contact Dan via email at mail@savagelove.net, follow him on Twitter: @fakedansavage, and visit ITMFA.org.*

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» ROBERT FLORES

Canna Candys Raspberry Lollipop

COURTESY OF CANNA CANDY

Medical-marijuana edibles have come a long way. Edibles average about 10 percent of all cannabis sales, which will grow as more states legalize pot. Along with growth comes regulation and rightly so. When Colorado legalized weed, visits to the emergency room spiked, so the state created legislation requiring edibles to be limited to 10-milligram doses. California has adopted many of those laws, but you can still purchase edibles as high as 300 milligram. So when purchasing edibles, always divide your intake accordingly.

Canna Candys' tasty lollipops come in different flavors and compounds including CBD and THC. The raspberry lollipop I bought contained 50 milligrams of CBD, the non-psychoactive cannabinoid, and came in a resealable container. Edibles will not hit you for at least half an hour, so after licking the lollipop for about 20 minutes, see where you're at. (Novice pot users will continue to nibble at that cookie or brownie, and BDDM, they're high AF and think they're going to die!)

It was perfect! I didn't even use one fifth of the lollipop, but once it hit, it really took hold. CBD is good for relaxing and relieving stress, and I could feel my neck and shoulders, as well as my face and forehead, becoming slightly numb. If I were having a restless night, I might have kept the lollipop in my mouth longer. The CBD used in the lollipop was of very high quality, and the raspberry flavor was sweet. There was no aftertaste or aroma of cannabinoid. All in all, it's a very discreet way of consuming medical marijuana.

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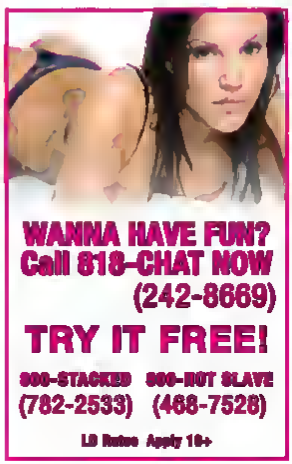
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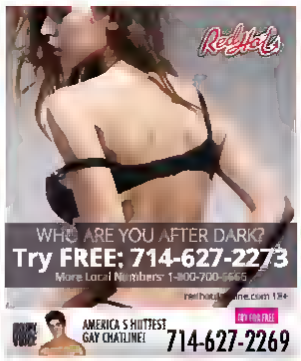
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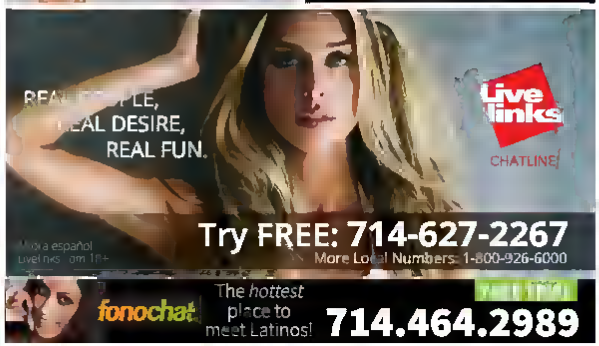
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DNA Biological Technician (Irvine, CA) Provide expert services in chemical sequencing analysis; DNA extraction and molecular research. BS in Molecular Cell and Developmental Biology, Chemistry or related engineering field and University coursework in Developmental Biology Lab. Mail resume to Angela Kim, M.Sc., HR Mgr Zymo Research Corporation 17062 Murphy Ave., Irvine CA 92614.

Industrial Engineer (Cypress, CA) Plan and establish utilization of resources for industrial/commercial energy saving products. Bachelor's in Industrial Engineering. Resume to: DNHillmgmt@me.com, 10900 Holder St, Cypress, CA 90630

Chief Editor-E/T, e-Sports Magazine. Responsible for the final production of the company. Req. 3 yrs of exp. in job offered or related. Mail resume to: Inven Global Limited, LLC, 1621 Alton Pkwy Suite 250, Irvine, CA 92606

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Hey, Ladies!

The Women of Rock Oral History Project aims to rewrite history

BY MARY CARREON

When I think about rock & roll as a whole, the artists who first come to mind are **Robert Plant, Jim Morrison, Jimmy Page, John Lennon, Keith Moon, Jimi Hendrix, Eric Clapton, Iggy Pop, Slash,** etc., etc. The list goes on forever. But only after naming all these musical dudes, plus a handful more, does a lady rocker get mentioned.

Why is that? Why are **Patti Smith, Joan Jett, Janis Joplin, Mama Cass** and **Grace Slick** either afterthoughts or left out completely? Why are blues singers **Mamie Smith, Lucille Hagsmin** or **Billie Holiday** excluded from the conversation as the foremothers of rock, especially when **B.B. King, Muddy Waters, Bo Diddley** and **Buddy Guy** are recognized as the bluesy guys who influenced the aforementioned male legends of rock?

Thankfully, a kickass woman is tackling this issue. On Jan. 11 at **Zebulon Café** in **Los Angeles**, a panel of female punk-rock pioneers gathered for the **Women of Rock Oral History Project. Tanya Pearson** came up with the idea during her senior year at **Smith College** in **Massachusetts** in 2014 while researching female rock musicians for a symposium on the history of censorship. Focusing on the representations of women in '90s rock media, she discovered a lack of information on the pioneering all-female punk bands she'd followed as a teenager. Pearson set out to close the musical gender gap by interviewing influential female rockers and making their stories available via www.womenofrock.org.

People queued up at the café's entrance an hour prior to the recent event. While hanging in line, it seemed there was an unspoken dress code that pretty much all rock-lovers abide by, as synonymous with the genre as tutus are to ballet or habits are to nuns: lots of black and/or dark colors, leather anything, eyeliner (yes, even on men), hair that is dark or has colors strewn through it or is partly shaved and/or disheveled, black skinny jeans with boots, sunglasses (yes, even at night), and sometimes hats.

The room was packed with just as many men as women, all of them adoring fans of the night's featured punkers: singer/songwriter/musician **Azalia Snail**; drummer and lyricist **Michalla Gonzales** from the bands **Kamala, Spitboy** and **Karnivores**; drummer **Patty Schemel** from **Hole** and **Upsat**; **Allison Wolfe**, the lead singer of **Bratmobile** and **Ex Stains**, **Alice Bag**, the front woman of **The Bags**; **B' Girls** bassist **Cynthia Ross**, drummer **Alice da Buhr** and drummer/vocalist **Bria Howard-Darling** of **Fanny**; **Sherry Barnett** of **Tha Mustangs**; and **Julie Cafritz**, the guitarist from **Puasy Galore** and **Free Kitten**.

"I worked in a record store, and I wouldn't even sell records to people that I didn't like," Cafritz recalled. The crowd and the women onstage with her laughed. "The customer would bring up the record, and I'd be like, 'Oh, we don't sell that record, and they'd be like, 'I just handed it to you,' and I'd hurl it under the counter like, 'No, we don't fucking sell that record,' so I was a jerk."

Snail chimed in, "She was a jerk, everyone."

But that's because there was an extra hurdle female rockers had to jump. There was an innate pressure to keep up with the boys. They had to play as hard, rock as hard and work even harder to earn respect. Wolfe explained that she and Bratmobile, an all-girl three-piece, would often show up to venues hours before the show to set up and do sound check, and the bouncers or owners would tell them to come back because the show didn't start until way later. "We'd always be like, 'Um, okay, if you don't want the headlining band to set up [ ]' and they'd always be like, 'Oh, that's YOU?!'"

Pearson, who moderated the panel, explained that prior to the event she researched to see if any of them had beef with each other because she didn't want to make it awkward.

Snail looked at Schemel and said, "No, but **Courtney Love** once burned me with a cigarette in London. Did you ever hear about that?"

Schemel slightly rolled her eyes and shook her head no—but she didn't look shocked.

"We were recording this show in London, and [Courtney] wanted to jam with us," Snail said. "So she just hopped on the stage, and she took **Danny Oxanberg**'s 1920s **Gibson** slide guitar, and she's about to slam it on the ground, and all of us were like, 'NO! We're not trust-funders, you can't break that' [ ] then the French sound woman was like, 'No, no, no—the show is over,' and Courtney was like, 'You French cunt!' So then all these guys were surrounding Courtney and causing this big scene because **Kurt [Cobain]** had just died and everyone blamed her for it. I was putting away my stuff, and Courtney's got this cigarette, and she's waving it around while talking to people, and all of a sudden, I feel this burning on my cheek, and her cigarette was pretty much stuck to me. . . I should've sued her, right?"

The women told stories about how women they knew outplayed **Keith Richards** on guitar, what it was like playing in bands with guys, and how the **Spice Girls** were ants everything these women believed in—despite operating under the guise of "girl power." As the saying goes, "Well-behaved women seldom make history." These badass women personify that.

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